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Department of State

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

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DRAFTED BY HA/HR: RESNYDER:CHL
APPROVED BY HA: MLEVITSKY
HA/HR: TATULL
ARA/SC: SO'CONNELL

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P 101959Z DEC 82
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ANEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY

STATE 343986

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: SHUM, PING, AR
SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT MEETING WITH ABUELAS DE LA PLAZA DE
MAYO

REF: BUENOS AIRES 6732

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT).

2. SUMMARY: DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVITSKY MET NOV. 15 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF ABUELAS DE LA PLAZA DE MAYO. GRANDMOTHERS DESCRIBED PROBLEM OF 110 MISSING CHILDREN AND THEIR UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO GET GOA TO ADDRESS ISSUE. GRANDMOTHERS STATED THAT QUESTION OF DISAPPEARED WILL HAVE TO BE RESOLVED PRIOR TO A RETURN OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN ARGENTINA. THEY SAID THAT INCREASED PRESSURE ON GOA FROM BOTH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND PRIVATE GROUPS IS NECESSARY. LEVITSKY RESPONDED THAT US WOULD CONTINUE TO PRESS GOA VIA DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. ASSISTANT SECRETARY ABRAMS ALSO RAISED QUESTION OF CHILDREN WITH ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR WHO AGREED THAT PROBLEM IS IMPORTANT AND WHO PROMISED TO RAISE MATTER AGAIN WITH GOA SENIOR OFFICIALS. END SUMMARY.

3. ON NOV. 15 HA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY MELVYN LEVITSKY MET WITH TWO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ABUELAS DE

LA PLAZA DE MAYO, MRS. MARIANI AND MRS. CARLOTT. THE TWO WOMEN SAID THAT THEIR ORGANIZATION REPRESENTS 107 GRANDMOTHERS WHOSE 110 GRANDCHILDREN WERE EITHER TAKEN AT THE TIME OF THEIR PARENTS' DISAPPEARANCE OR WHO WERE REPORTEDLY BORN DURING THEIR PARENTS' DETENTION. GRANDMOTHERS SAID THAT THERE ARE PROBABLY SOME 400 GRANDCHILDREN WHO ARE MISSING, BUT THE OTHER GRANDPARENTS HAVE BEEN AFRAID TO COME FORWARD. THEY HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN ANY RESPONSE FROM THE GOA TO PLEAD FOR INFORMATION ON THEIR GRANDCHILDREN. THEY ADDED THAT THEY ARE CONVINCED THAT THE GRANDCHILDREN ARE ALIVE AND THAT MOST HAVE ALREADY BEEN PLACED WITH ADOPTIVE PARENTS. FIVE OF THESE GRANDCHILDREN, THEY SAID, HAVE BEEN FOUND IN THE PAST SIX YEARS.

4. THEY CLAIMED THAT THE ENTIRE ARGENTINE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT IS INVOLVED IN THE DISAPPEARANCE PROBLEM IN SOME WAY, AND THEY SAID THAT EVERYONE INVOLVED WILL HAVE TO BE PUNISHED PRIOR TO A RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT. THE POLITICAL LEADERS, THEY MAINTAINED, WILL NOT ACCEPT A COVERUP OF THIS ISSUE. IF THE ISSUE IS NOT RESOLVED THEN A CIVIL WAR IS A POSSIBILITY IN THEIR VIEW.

5. THE GRANDMOTHERS SAID THAT SINCE ARGENTINA IS CONCERNED ABOUT ITS REPUTATION ABROAD, INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE ON THIS ISSUE IS HELPFUL. THEY ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT WHILE

PRESSURE FROM FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS IS FINE, AFTER SIX YEARS THE PRESSURE MUST BE INCREASED. THEY SAID THAT THEY ARE ASKING THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL GROUPS TO PUBLICIZE THE FACT THAT CHILDREN, AS WELL AS ADULTS, ARE MISSING, AND THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA.

6. DAS LEVITSKY RESPONDED THAT THE US WOULD CONTINUE TO PRESS THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT ON THIS ISSUE BUT WOULD USE DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS BECAUSE IT IS THE CONVICTION OF THIS ADMINISTRATION THAT THIS IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH IN HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS. HE SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF THE DISAPPEARED IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR THE UNITED STATES, BUT THE US HAS OTHER INTERESTS IN ARGENTINA AS WELL. HE ADDED THAT WHILE THE US WOULD PURSUE THE QUESTION THROUGH TRADITIONAL DIPLOMATIC MEASURES, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS COULD AND SHOULD TAKE A MORE PUBLIC STANCE.

7. ON DEC. 3, 1982 HAS ASSISTANT SECRETARY ABRAMS RAISED THE ISSUE OF THE DISAPPEARED CHILDREN WITH ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR GARCIA DEL SOLAR. AMBASSADOR AGREED THAT THE QUESTION OF THE CHILDREN IS A GRAVE HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM WHICH HE HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED WITH HIS FOREIGN MINISTER AND PRESIDENT. THEY HAD NOT REJECTED HIS VIEW BUT HAD POINTED OUT THE PROBLEM OF, FOR EXAMPLE, TAKING CHILDREN FROM THEIR ADOPTIVE PARENTS. ABRAMS SUGGESTED THAT THE PROBLEM MIGHT BE HANDED OVER TO THE CHURCH OR TO A COMMISSION COMPOSED OF CHURCH PEOPLE, DOCTORS, AND OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTAL ELEMENTS. RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM WOULD HAVE ENORMOUS HUMANITARIAN AND POLITICAL CONTENT. AGAIN THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE WAS IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT AND WOULD RAISE THIS POINT ONCE MORE WITH BUENOS AIRES.

8. TEXT OF ABRAMS-GARCIA DEL SOLAR MEMCON BEING POUNDED.
DAM

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

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